a) Synopsis of the Proposed Doctoral Research Work to be carried out under Visva-Bharati

i) Title of the Research: Role of Farm Science Centre on Agricultural information Networks: A study among the farm women of North Bengal

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b) Keywords: Knowledge, information, networks, farm women, cognition, motivation, aspiration, empathy, communication

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Introduction

Women form a large segment of the agricultural workforce. As such, they deserve increased attention of agricultural extension service in every developing nation. There is a need for an action-oriented plan to reach the millions of women in agriculture who will fill the breadbaskets of the third world and contribute to their exports (Das, 1995). Female farmers are not considered and their farm activities and/or issues concerning them have been the last priorities in the country's Agricultural research agenda, and so lacked improved extension packages and services that assist them to improve their productivity. There is a lack of concern about the multiple roles of farm women while doing research on identifying the priority problems and developing extension systems that are appropriate to the farm family's lifecycle stages. Little efforts have been made to address and reduce heavy burden of work that female farmers face. Often its observed that major emphasis in agriculture is given to men's activities while the role of women in the farming system has been ignored. Married women in particular are by-passed in the transfer of improved agricultural technologies assuming that they will get the information through their husbands (EARO, 2000). Without due attention for development of the majority of the farm women, it is unlikely that country will be able to feed her people, to develop its agro industries , to provide adequate employment to sustain or improve current level of foreign exchange earnings (Chimdessa, 1998). Women in farm sector face many socio-economic, educational and legal obstacles in realizing their full potential. They also lack appropriate and usable information that would help them with their farming

activates. They need information on a wide range of subjects, including agricultural production, processing, marketing, trade laws and natural resource base. They also need to exchange indigenous knowledge, and they require access to ICTs to obtain information effectively and cost effectively (CTA, 2002).On the basis of the problem a proposed study will be conducted on "Role of Farm Science Centre on Agricultural information Networks". The study will be conducted with the following objective

Objective of the study:

1. To study the socio-personal profile of the respondents.
2. To analyze the agricultural information network of farm women.
3. To identify the role of farm science centre on knowledge dissemination among the respondents.
4. To identify factors influencing farm women's information network output interms of cognitive aspect.
5. To identify the constraints as perceived by the farm women in reaching out to relevant farm information.
6. To suggest some ameliorative measure based on findings.

Significance of the study:

To support women's extensive and multifaceted roles in agriculture and to enable them to respond to market incentives more efficiently, women need effective agricultural extension services. The result of this study will help to understand the flows and network of agricultural information, information sources that rural women use, factors influencing farm women's information network output and the different constraints and opportunities of extension

service in reaching out to women. The findings of this study can also be used in guiding policy makers and development planners who are concerned about gender issue while designing agricultural projects within the region and elsewhere in the country.

Review of literature:

Some salient review on earlier studies

Mahapatra (1987) explain that, in India, women learned of extension message- "some in a clearway and others not so clear"-through indirect channels of communication such as husbands, neighbours and other villagers.

According to Satio and Daphna (1992), development planners have assumed that information given to male farmers will be passed on the other farming members of the household. This does not often happen experiences indicates that agricultural knowledge acquired by male , unless they themselves will benefit, often does not " trickle across" effectively to women in the family .

According to Samuel (2001), Agricultural Extension institutions of developing countries faced many constraints in their activities of information generation and use. Most of the problems caused due to the poor socio-economic conditions of their clients, farmers, and weak infrastructural and institutional development of the area where they have been working.

Dagnachew (2002), states that extension efforts and technological packages usually address men farmers. Extension agents are most likely to visit male farmers than female farmers. The low level of women's education and cultural barriers prevent them from the exposure to extension channels by their initiative. The male dominated extension system also often

restricts from contacting and working with women due to strong taboos and value systems in rural areas.

Men and women perform different tasks they can substitute for one another only to a limited extent and this limitation creates different demands for extension information also, as men leave farms in search of paid employment in urban areas. Women are increasingly managing and operating farms on a regular and full-time basis (Edlu, 2006)

Women participation in agriculture will be acknowledged when women farmer will actively participate to build and improve their knowledge and gain access to new and necessary information to make use of most of them in their farming activities. By linking the knowledge and information flow amongst women socio economic progress can be achieved (Dhaka et. al, 2012).

Operational definition

Farm women: The women who actively participate in the farm related operations. According to pearson (1979) there are four type of farm women .1. Independent producer, 2.Agricultural Partners, 3.Agricultural helper and 4. Farm homemakers

Personal traits/characteristics: includes the variable related to personal traits such as age, marital status, level of education, communication skill, family size, and practice of sharing the information with others.

Socio-economic factors: This refers to the function of farm women in society, which is determined by various social and economic variables such as income, size of land holding etc.

Situational factors: Includes of surrounding influencing farm women's access to farm information such as the extent of social participation, information seeking behaviour, cosmopoliteness, access to credit and extension participation.

Psychological factors: Includes the variables of psychological dimension of individual respondent such as achievement motivation, level of aspiration, interpersonal trust, positiveness, empathy etc.

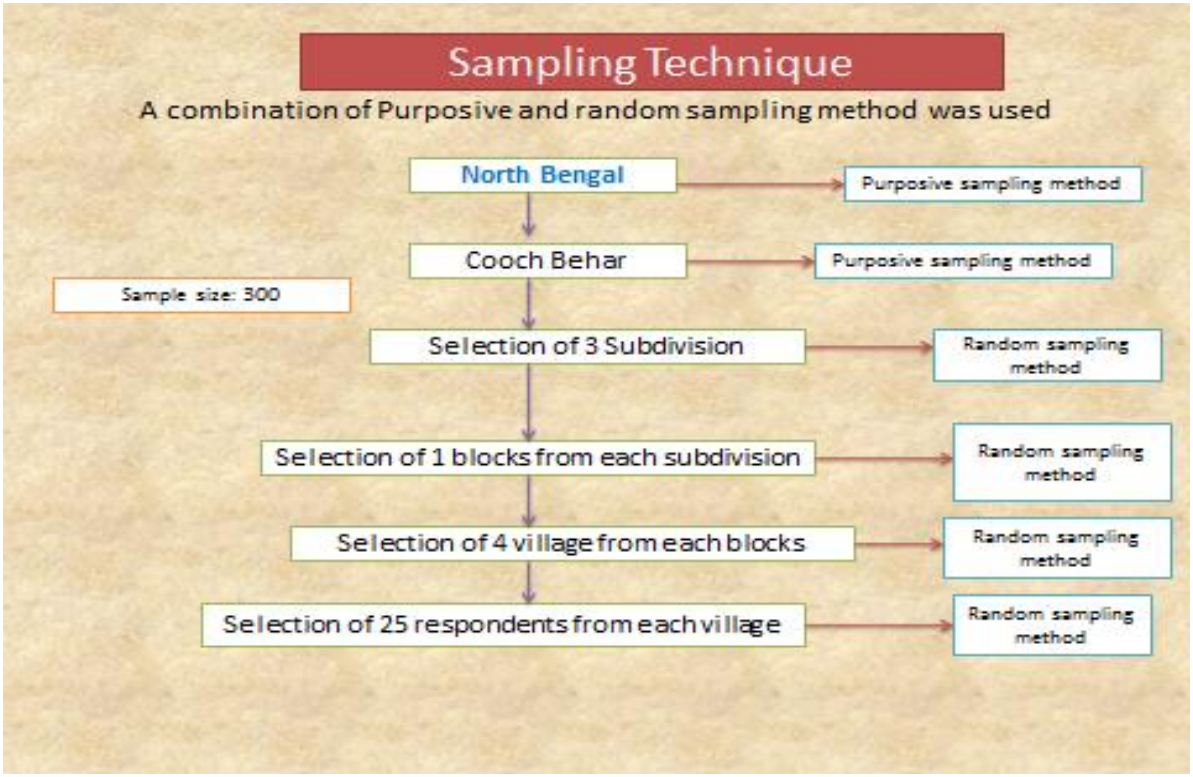
Network: The formal and informal relationships between women farmers and actors in the study area in relation to flows of farm information. A communication network is an interconnection of individuals who are connected by the exchange of information in a social system (Rogers &Kincaid 1981; Rogers 1995)

Knowledge of farm women on crop production practices: Knowledge is defined as acquaintance with facts, range of information, awareness or understanding, the body of facts, principle etc accumulated by mankind as far as one knows within the range of one's information. Knowledge as defined in the proposed study includes those behaviour and test situation which emphasize remembering by recall of ideas, material or practices.

Research methodology:

The present study will be conducted in purposively selected Cooch Behar District of North Bengal. Random sampling method will be used for selection of blocks, villages and respondents. The ex post factor research design will be followed in the study. The data will be collected by structured interview schedule. Both parametric and non-parametric statistical test will be used which will be appropriate in light of the objective of study. The statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, pearson's product moment correlation, t-test,

pearson's chi-squared test (X^2) test, multiple regression will be used in the investigation for the precise and meaningful analysis and interpretation of the data.


Sampling Technique
A combination of Purposive and random sampling method was used
North Bengal
Purposive sampling method
Cooch Behar
Purposive sampling method
Sample size: 300
Selection of 3 Subdivision
Random sampling method
Selection of 1 blocks from each subdivision
Random sampling method
Selection of 4 village from each blocks
Random sampling method
Selection of 25 respondents from each village
Random sampling method

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